

The secretary of the United States for the Department of Foreign Affairs, to whom was referred the papers herewith enclosed, respecting the eastern boundary line of the said states, reports ...

The **SECRETARY** of the **UNITED STATES** for the Department of **FOREIGN AFFAIRS**, to whom was referred the Papers herewith enclosed, respecting the **EASTERN BOUNDARY LINE** of the said **STATES, REPORTS,**

THAT in his opinion, effectual measure should be immediately taken to settle all disputes with the crown of Great-Britain relative to that line.

He thinks that copies of the said papers should be transmitted to the minister plenipotentiary of the United States at that court, with instructions to present a proper representation of the case, and to propose that commissioners be appointed to hear and finally decide those disputes.

If this measure should appear expedient to Congress, your secretary would suggest the following hints on the subject, viz.

That the number of commissioners should be fix, or eight, or ten, or twelve, at the election of his Britannic Majesty; the exact number not being important.

That two commissioners of the like tenor, to be agreed upon between our and their minsters, be issued to the whole number, viz. one by the United States, and the other by his Britannic majesty.

That each party shall name the one half of the whole number.

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That they shall all be foreigners, or all be persons of the two nations, at the election of his Britannic majesty—it not being important.

If he should prefer having them of the two nations, then that he shall name the one half of them, being inhabitants of any of his dominions, except those which are situated in and to the west and fouth of the gulph of St. Lawrence—and that the United States shall name the other half from any of their countries except Massachusetts.

That the commissioners, if of the two countries, shall sit in North-America; but if foreigners, in Europe, at any place which may be agreed upon by our and their ministers.

That previous to their proceeding to business, they shall respectively take an oath, fairly, impartially and justly, without fear, favor or affection, to hear and decide the said matters in difference, according to the best of their skill and understanding, agreeable to the directions, true intent and meaning of the said commissions.

That in case of the death, or refusal to act, of any of the said commissioners, previous to their opening and proceeding to execute the said commission, (but not afterwards) the place of such so dying or refusing, shall be supplied by the party who named him; and that a certificate thereof, under the seal of Great-Britain or of the United States, (as the case may be) directed to the said commissioners, by the stile of the commissioners for settling the boundary line between his Britannic majesty and the United States, on the easterly side of the latter, shall be full evidence of such appointment.

That a majority of the whole number shall be a quorum for every purpose committed to them, expressly or necessarily implied in their commissions; such as chusing their chairman, appointing secretaries and surveyors, adjourning from day to day, or for a longer term, (which should not exceed ten days) deciding on matters of evidence, and finally determining the matters in difference, &c.

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That they keep regular minutes of their proceedings—that all evidence, whether oral or written, be entered at large in them— that copies of all maps and surveys admitted as evidence be made and kept with these papers.

That their chairman for the time being, shall have power to administer oaths—That contempts offered to the board, while convened and sitting on the business of the commission, shall be punishable as contempts committed in a court of justice; and that a certificate by the chairman of such contempt, delivered to any civil magistrate, shall make it the duty of such magistrate, to apprehend and commit the offender to prison, there to remain until thence delivered in due course of law.

That both parties shall have free access to the public offices and records of the other, and be supplied with copies or exemplifications of any parts thereof, on paying the accustomed fees.

That both the parties shall produce to the board whatever they may have to offer, within three months after the opening of the said commission, by a quorum of the commissioners at the place to be appointed, who shall fit and be ready to do business during the whole of that term, unless the parties shall by writing, under the hands of their agent or agents, sooner declare that they have nothing further to offer.

That on receiving such declarations from both the parties, if within the said three months, or from and immediately after the expiration of that term, whichever of those events shall first happen, the commissioners shall within two days thereafter, deliver their judgement in writing, under their hands and seals, or the hands and seals of a majority of them, to the agents of both parties, viz one copy for each party and that the said judgment shall be absolute, final and conclusive between the said parties.

That on having given judgement as aforesaid, or as soon as may be within two months thereafter, they shall annex transcripts of all their minutes, proceeding, and maps or

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surveys above mentioned, to each of the said commissions, and under their hands and seals, or the hands and seals of a majority of them, shall return the same; the one issued by his Britannic majesty to his Britannic majesty, and the one by the United States to the United States in Congress assembled, and that the delivery of the same to their respective agents, shall be deemed and adjudged to be a good and sufficient return.

That the allowance to be made the said commissioners for service and expences, be fixed by our and their minister, and that each party pay the one half thereof.

That it be expressly stipulated, that his Britannic majesty shall within six months alter the day on which the judgement shall be delivered to the agents as aforesaid, cause the United States to be put in full possession of all the territories, lands and islands, which by the said judgement may be adjudged to the said states, and then being in the possession of his majesty: And on the other hand, that the United States shall within six months after the day on which the judgment shall be delivered as aforesaid, cause his Britannic majesty to be put in full possession of all the territories, lands and islands which by the said judgment may be adjudged to him, and then being in the possession of the United States.

All which is humbly submitted to the wisdom of CONGRESS. **JOHN JAY.**